# The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

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## HONESTY IN RELIGION.

By Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.

WHO is the honest man religiously? The finest answer to this question that we have ever seen was given by Dr. M. J. Savage, of New York. "The honest man religiously is the one who faces the facts of the world, who does not shrink from the truth because facing it hurts, because facing it entails upon him present and personal loss—loss of prestige, loss of position, of power; the man who dares to open his eyes and see things as they are and then stand manfully, believing in God so much that he cannot consent to be anything less than honest; the man who will not put his name to a creed that he does not believe, who will not stand in a false position in the pulpit, who will not sit in a false position in the pew, who will not cast his influence in favour of anything which he believes will be for the injury and not for the help of the world; the man who dares to stand by what he believes to be the real truth of things—such is the honest man religiously."

Contrast the position here set forth, with that of thousands of members of the so-called "orthodox" Churches to-day! They are full of *religious indifference.* Our Churches are full of it too, but with *us* it works in an entirely different way. With *them*, the amazing result of it all is, that thousands of laymen who have given up every doctrine distinctive of "orthodox" Christianity—the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, Miracles—think fit to remain contentedly conforming to Churches which make these the points of vital importance. Only an utter indifference to religious questions could make men of sense and honour contented with such a state of things. Who has not met the conforming member of an "orthodox" Church who says privately, "I am a Unitarian, *if I am anything?*" He is to be found everywhere.

In the case of our own Church, the indifference works in another way. The man who is infected with it keeps a nominal connection with his Church, pays his stipend, and is never seen inside the doors from one year's end to another. He becomes one of that group of "indifferentists" who are making our Church a by-word among people who

say, "Look there, Unitarianism always ends in believing in nothing." If our Church were ever to be killed, it would be these indifferentists who would do it. No inefficiency on the part of any minister could do one-hundredth part of the mischief that they are doing; and they are the men whose fathers made such a splendid stand for religious freedom and religious faith long ago!

None the less, let those *who are doing the work* take heart. Though our worst enemies are those of our own household, a stout-hearted minority is never beaten. "The end is not yet."

## LESSONS FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

*(In connection with the Scheme of Systematic Instruction for the Sunday Schools of the Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Association, 1908-9.)*

By Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.

An Important Distinction.

Our special passages are taken from the Second Isaiah (chapters xl.-lxvi.) and a word of explanation is necessary. In our Bible we have a continuous book of sixty-six chapters. But the prophecies contained therein are not all the work of the same prophet, nor do they arise out of the same historical events. It is now customary to divide the book of Isaiah into two parts, the first consisting of chapters i.-xxxix., and the second of chapters xl.-lxvi. The earlier part is the work of a prophet who received his call in the year 740 B.C., as shown by the historical reference in chap. vi., 1. He is known as the First Isaiah to distinguish him from the prophet who is chiefly responsible for chapters xl.-lxvi., and who is known as the Second Isaiah. The reason of this distinction will be plain to anyone who reads carefully the two parts, noting the different tone, as well as the different topics touched upon. With the first part we need not concern ourselves, but it is very essential to understand the stirring times in which the Second Isaiah uttered his noble prophecies.

The Historical Background of the Second Isaiah (chaps. xl.-lxvi.)

Since the years 597 B.C. and 586 B.C. the Jews had been in exile in Babylon. Their conquerors were the Chaldæans, then the most powerful of eastern nations. At first the Jews had hoped for speedy deliverance, but as year after year passed away, and their captivity still continued, they began to lose hope and to think that their God had deserted them. About the year 550 B.C. a new conqueror comes forward in the east, and his victories begin to attract general attention. Amongst those who followed his career with intense interest was a captive Jew, a man of great religious power and endowed with the imaginative insight of a poet. Might it not be that Cyrus, this great conqueror, was an instrument in God's hands, destined to deliver the sorely-tried people of Israel? More and more the conviction grew in this prophet's mind that Cyrus was indeed doing a divine work, not the least important outcome of which would be the restoration to freedom of the exiled people. No wonder his own heart was cheered, his religious zeal roused and re-kindled! As yet Cyrus had not tried conclusions with the Chaldæans, but it was inevitable that he must soon do so. Then there could be only one issue: The might of Babylon would be overthrown, their captives granted liberty to return to Palestine.

That, then, was God's message to him—a message of hope and encouragement. Let it do for his people what it had done for him. He as God's prophet could not keep silent. Accordingly we have that magnificent series of prophecies found in Is. xl.-lxvi., dealing with the one great theme of Israel's restoration from exile in Babylon. In all the world's literature there is no finer record of religious fervour and confident reliance in divine power and goodness. To-day we cannot read over this great-souled prophet's messages without being the better for their impressive and inspiring optimism. What comfort and joy they must have brought to his exiled countrymen, and with what breathless interest the latter must have awaited the issue of the campaign! Meanwhile, what precious meaning the prophet's words must have had for them as they took form in messages like these. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,

saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her welfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. . . . O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" (xl., 1, 2, 9.)

Such then is the situation, such the hopes which sustained the soul of the great prophet whom we call the Second Isaiah. We can now better understand the religious rapture which especially characterises chapters xl.-xli. and is seen throughout the whole of his work. His prophecies, although written during the captivity in Babylon, are inspired by the thought that through the divine ordering of events then in progress the Jewish kingdom will be restored and Jerusalem's former greatness return. Such was indeed the case. Cyrus overcame Babylon in the year 538 B.C., and in the following year the exiled Jews obtained his permission to return to Palestine.

### The Religious Significance of Israel's Sufferings.

But the prophet is concerned not only with the present and future—he tries also to understand the past and to read it in the light of his deeply religious faith. If it is God who is to bring about Israel's release, He it is also who was responsible for Israel's captivity. His great purposes are sometimes accomplished by means of misfortune and their fruition is only made possible through suffering. Earlier prophets saw clearly enough that Israel had greatly sinned; they also perceived that as a consequence Israel must also greatly suffer. Hence, they had no difficulty in regarding the Exile not as a political disaster but as a religious punishment. The Second Isaiah also regarded it in this way. But he takes up another great religious truth which earlier prophets had dimly perceived and makes of it the most suggestive and the most profound of spiritual lessons. Yahweh was something more than the God of the Jews, he was the God of the whole earth, holy and righteous in all his ways. While therefore he had regard to Israel's restoration and with that end in view used Cyrus as his chosen instrument, he contemplated a still greater consummation, i.e., the bringing of all nations to himself. This great thought is not new. Two earlier prophets express it in almost identical words (Isaiah ii. 2-4, Micah iv. 1-5). But now that thought is linked with the thought of Israel's sufferings. Has not Yahweh made Israel suffer with a view to the accomplishment of His supreme purpose? Is not the Jewish nation by reason of its sufferings the divinely appointed instrument for the fulfilment of God's great end? That is the illuminating conception which comes to the prophet—the thought of the value and significance of suffering. Israel had suffered, not merely for her own sake, but in order also that other nations should come to know and worship Yahweh and "the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the deep." We cannot too carefully contemplate this great truth, and a recent writer recognises its great and far-reaching character in these words: —"It is a great and Divine law that mankind rises to its best and noblest through sufferings and agonies, that the individual suffers for the many, the just for the unjust. 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.'" Inasmuch as the reference in the last few words forms part of one of our special passages, and concerns the servant of Yahweh, we are brought face to face with this most important question:

### What are we to Understand by "The Servant of Yahweh?"

Already the answer has been partially given. In order that there may be no possible mistake we must gather up into several separate propositions the prophet's thought:—

(1). There is only one God and Lord —Yahweh.

(2). All nations are to serve him.

(3). Israel is Yahweh's Servant leading all nations to serve Yahweh.

(4). The Servant's sufferings are a means to the end—Israel suffers that others may serve.

If now a reference be made to (3) and (4), which have to do with our special passages, it will be seen that the Servant of Yahweh is to be identified, not with an individual, but with a nation. That at first may seem a little difficult. The language of the passages appears to lay stress upon a person. If we turn to chapter xlii. 1-4, the Servant is alluded to throughout in this personal way: "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street" (xlii. 2). But it is quite a common thing for a prophet when speaking to the whole of his countrymen to think of them together as if they were one individual. Frequently when the nation is addressed the name "Jacob" is given to it because the people are thought of collectively as the representative of Jacob. Thus the prophet is addressing the whole of his people in this way in Is. xliv. 1: "Yet now hear, O Jacob, my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen." No one can possibly mistake the prophet's meaning or fail to see that his audience is the nation, even though he, speaking in God's name, addresses it as "Jacob" and "Israel."

But if this form of address presents no difficulty, seeing that the prophets frequently employ it when the people together can alone be meant, it is necessary to point out that for other reasons some modern scholars do think of the Servant of Yahweh as an individual who lived in the time of the prophet. It is only fair to mention this and to make plain that there are differences of opinion on this important question. Nevertheless the majority of modern scholars are more and more coming to the conviction that the "Servant of Yahweh" represents the prophet's view of the Jewish nation. How completely this view satisfies the conditions will be best seen in a detailed treatment of the special passages. It is sufficient here to say that our answer to the question: "What are we to understand by 'the Servant of Yahweh'?" is briefly this: *The Servant of Yahweh is the whole nation of Israel.* All that it has suffered, all the characteristics with which the prophet endows it, have one supreme end in view. God has made Israel perfect through suffering in order that all nations may serve and worship Him, Yahweh. Because Israel was called to do that work, and had entered upon that service, the prophet speaks of the nation with perfect fitness as "the Servant of Yahweh."

## Obituary.

### Mr. Robert Bailie McNinch.

Seldom has the public sentiment of Larne and neighbourhood been more deeply moved than it was by the demise of the above-named gentleman, which occurred at the residence of his father, Mr. John McNinch, Larne, on Thursday morning, 9th July. He had been seriously unwell for only a comparatively brief period, but, unfortunately, the fell malady (Bright's disease) had been progressing for a considerable time before its presence was suspected. His ever cheery and optimistic spirit, and the natural unwillingness of generous manhood to give way to alarm or cause uneasiness to friends, prevented its discovery till too late for medical skill to do more than alleviate the inevitable sufferings. Sprung from two influential Kilwaughter families belonging to the Old Presbyterian Congregation of Larne and Kilwaughter since the foundation thereof, our deceased friend inherited the best qualities of both, and by his urbanity, his unfailing cheerfulness and genial good nature, combined with a lofty integrity, he won the affectionate confidence of all with whom he came in contact in his private, public and professional careers, and of numbers in town and elsewhere with whom he never exchanged a word. No one ever heard from his lips the words of severe criticism or bitter censure, and when such came from the lips of others he would turn them aside by a humorous sally or opportune change of subject. The funeral procession, composed of all classes and creeds, was one of the largest that ever passed through Larne streets, as amid unmistakable signs of grief on the part of a community not unduly emotional, his remains were borne to their last resting-place among those of his kindred, in Kilwaughter, on Saturday, 11th July. Rev. James Kennedy (Larne) officiated at the house and grave.

## Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Sunday Schools.

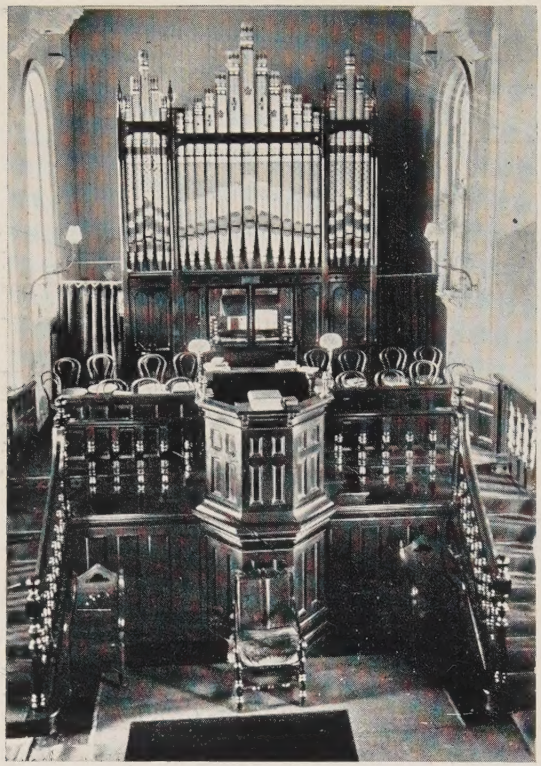
CONFERENCE HELD IN LARNE.

NAMES OF THE MINISTERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF LARNE AND KILWAUGHTER.

So far as is known the first minister inclined to Presbyterian ways who preached in Larne was the Rev. George Dunbar. He officiated in the Parish Church from 1625 till 1637, when he was deposed by Bishop Leslie, and returned to Scotland. After an interval he was followed by the Rev. Thos. Hall, A.M., ordained in 1646, and ejected from the Parish Church in 1662 by Bishop Jeremy Taylor. Followed by the great bulk of his congregation, he built the first Presbyterian Meeting-House ever erected in Larne in 1668. It was a plain thatched structure, and in it he officiated till his death in 1695. His successor was the Rev. Wm. Leech, whose ministry was very short. Rev. Wm. Ogilby ministered from 1700 till 1712, and was succeeded by the Rev. James Hood, 1715-1716, over choice of whom there was a division, the seceders forming themselves into the congregation now known as First Larne in connection with the General Assembly. Rev. Josias Clugston, 1717-1775. In 1752 the Meeting-House was re-built in cruciform shape and with slated roof. Rev. Robert Sinclair, assistant and successor to Mr. Clugston, 1755-1795. Rev. Jas. Worral, B.A., Dublin, 1796-1807. Rev. James Crawford Ledlie, D.D., Glasgow, 1808-1832. In 1828 the Meeting-House was again re-built in its present square shape. Rev. Classon Porter, 1834-1885. Rev. Wm. M'Cullough, assistant to Rev. Classon Porter, 1875-1878. Rev. James Kennedy, assistant and successor to Rev. Classon Porter, 1878.

THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE, LARNE.

THE Ninth Annual Conference was held in the Old Presbyterian Church, Larne, on Saturday, 6th June. Close upon 500 teachers, scholars, and others interested in the religious training of the young, met together on the occasion. At 3-20 o'clock, the proceedings commenced by singing a hymn, with prayer by Rev. James Kennedy, who welcomed in his own name and in the name of his congregation, those who were in attendance. The chair was then taken by the President of the Association (Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A.), who, when letters of apology from Revs. M. S. Dunbar and E. Lockett had been read, called upon Rev. Eustace Thompson to read his paper on "The Proper Objective of the Sunday School." In his paper Mr. Thompson said the proper objective was the teaching of religion, and that this could best be effected by constant use of the Scriptures. But even so, scholars less than eight years old should never have Bibles in their own hands; those between eight and ten should have them to look at. Those between ten and sixteen should be set to learn a few of the very choicest passages and as many golden texts as they can. Scholars between twelve and sixteen should hear portions of it read and expounded. Scholars above sixteen should be encouraged to make a practice of reading it for themselves at home. Children less than eight should be told of the life and character of Jesus, with the omission of anything too difficult



INTERIOR: THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE, LARNE.

for them to grasp, or too perplexing; in the Old Testament they might be told about the First Sabbath and the Garden of Eden, also about Noah's Ark and Jacob's Ladder, and about Joseph and his brethren. Children between eight and ten might hear more about Jesus, with the addition of the Acts of the Apostles, and a few more stories from the Book of Genesis and some from Exodus. Those from ten to twelve might hear about any of the stories in the Pentateuch and the Books of Samuel and Kings. Those from twelve to fourteen might have in addition, Joshua, Judges and Ruth, and Daniel and Jonah; and they should be taught a connected outline of the history of Israel, as told in the Bible itself to the time of the captivity. At the age of fourteen, their attentions should be directed for the first time to the Gospel according to St. John, and to a few passages in the Epistles, and a very few in the Prophets. At the age of sixteen, other parts of the Bible should be studied in addition to what had gone before; for example, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Job, Ezra, Nehemiah; and in the New Testament, the first five Epistles, and James, Jude and Revelation; and the rest in either Testament. Later still, The Psalms should be made familiar more and more, little by little, from the very beginning.

In addition to instruction in the detail of separate portions, a general knowledge of the structure of the Bible, and the nature of its contents, and the inter-relation of the several Books should be imparted to all scholars above ten years of age, this knowledge being made more complete gradually with every advancing year.

For the proper objective of your Sunday-Schools should include the imparting to your scholars, such an intelligent and complete acquaintance with the Scriptures, that through all their lives, they may, if they will, be made wise by them unto salvation.

In the discussion which followed, the Revs. H. J. Rossington, J. A. Kelly, A. O. Ashworth, R. M. King and Mr. James Steel took part. Mr. Rossington, in the course of his remarks, agreed that the Bible was not read so much as it used to be, or as it ought to be read, but thought one reason was that it had not been understood or taught in the right way. From one point of view it was correct to say that the Bible had to be lost before it could be found. This he illustrated by a reference to his own experience. Having later been taught to approach it as he would any other book, to read it reasonably and reverently, and allow it to make its own appeal, he had come to have an enhanced opinion of its interest and power as literature, and of its supreme value as a moral and spiritual guide. It needed to be thought of and read, not as a treasure-house of texts, but as a

collection of books, whose purpose and spirit must be realised before their lessons could be properly understood. Consequently, he thought Mr. Thompson's scheme, although well thought out, was too ambitious. It was far better at first to attempt a little and to do that thoroughly.

The President, in closing the discussion, emphasied the need for definiteness in their aims. No knowledge could be imparted without a good deal of trouble. The Bible was difficult to teach to young children, because much of it was difficult to understand. Who, for instance, could teach the Book of Ezekiel? He would not be disposed to criticise the teacher who found those things difficult. It was desirable to have a book of connected passages from the Old Testament of different stages of interest drawn from the personal elements for use in their Sunday Schools. He hoped the scheme of instruction would result in definite aims.

LARNE MANSE.

Mr. C. J. M'Kisack moved, and Mr. F. J. Orr seconded, a vote of thanks to the reader of the paper and to the Larne congregation for their hospitality, which, being carried, was responded to by Mr. Thompson and Mr. Kennedy, and the large party adjourned to the schoolroom adjoining for tea. As this apartment was found to be too small, though of considerable dimensions, the visitors were accommodated in the beautifully-kept grounds around the building, and, the weather being summer-like, this was very much enjoyed.

*(Photos by E. W. Mack, Larne.)*

## REPORTS.

**Ballyclare, Crumlin & Templepatrick.**—On Saturday the 4th July, the scholars in connection with these Sunday Schools, together with a large number of adult members of the congregations, assembled on May's land, Templepatrick, to participate in their annual Sunday School treat. The weather was of the most delightful kind and the beautiful place selected for the meeting was felt to be admirably adapted to the purpose. Last year these united schools met in Crumlin, for next year there is a promise of an invitation from Ballyclare. The meeting in Templepatrick this year was of a most enjoyable description, and there must have been in all about 300 people present. Refreshments were served immediately on the arrival of friends, and subsequently the afternoon was spent on the hill in the enjoyment of many kinds of games, notable among them being rounders, racing for prizes, and tug-of-war. About 5 o'clock the welcome cup of tea was ready, and all sat round to enjoy it and to indulge in a real good chat about the good old times. Towards the close of the day, Rev. W. Fielding moved a vote of thanks to the minister and congregation of Templepatrick for their hospitality, and this having been seconded by Rev. W. A. Weatherall, it was carried with acclamation. Rev. A. Turner responded, and mentioned that the success of

the day was largely due to his young people, who worked well on such occasions, and especially to their Secretary, Mr. John Moore, with whom had rested the general directions. It was felt to be very good to meet together in this way, and no doubt future gatherings will be eagerly looked forward to. It ought to be mentioned that before separating a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. J. B. Wiley, J.P., was passed, thanking him for kind permission to meet on May's land.

**Comber, Killinchy & Rademon.**—A very pleasant day was spent by the United Sunday Schools of Comber, Killinchy and Rademon, at Florida, on Saturday, July 18th. During the preceding week the weather had been very wet, heavy thunder showers falling almost every day. On Saturday, however, a complete and welcome change took place. Bright sunshine lasted from morning till night, and made the conditions ideal for enjoyment in the open air. About twelve o'clock the party from Comber arrived at Florida in well-equipped brakes, accompanied by their minister, Rev. T. Dunkerley, whom all were delighted to see after his recent dangerous accident. A few minutes brought the Rademon contingent, the seven miles across country having been covered in brakes, cars, and on bicycles. Refreshments were immediately served on the lawn in front of the fine old mansion-house, which is unfortunately unoccupied, and somewhat out of repair. The appetites of the excursionists had been whetted by the delightful drive, and very quickly the buns, lemonade, &c., had disappeared. A large field immediately adjoining was placed at the disposal of the party. This was now visited, and games of many kinds were soon in full swing. Lovers of the dance indulged their fancy to the music of the violin. About two o'clock the strains of an approaching fife and drum band announced the arrival of the Killinchy friends. The children, being now all present in the field, competitions of various kinds were organised, and valuable prizes offered to the successful participators. In running, jumping and skipping, the young people of the different schools met in friendly rivalry. The endeavours of the little ones seemed to give much delight to themselves, and furnished great amusement for their parents and teachers. At five o'clock the band summoned all again to the lawn for tea. Quickly the hour arrived when a start on the homeward journey had to be made by the visitors, who departed from the scene of the day's enjoyment with reluctance, leaving behind in the field the Killinchy friends, whose numbers were now rapidly increasing. The memory of a happy day spent in beautiful surroundings in the company of many friends, will long be cherished by those whose privilege it was to be present.

**Larne.**—On Friday, 3rd ult., the pupils attending this Sunday School, reinforced by a goodly contingent from the Kilwaughter Sunday School and some other friends, enjoyed their annual drive along the magnificent coast road to Garron Tower. Setting out from the Church gate at 10 o'clock in seven large well-filled brakes and one smaller carriage, the happy party reached the Tower at 1-30 p.m., where after certain necessary attentions to the "inner man," the usual games for the little ones were organised on the velvety turf, groups of the more advanced in years disappeared up the mountain side, other parties made excursions down to the water's edge, while the seniors took their ease in their inn or on the lawn, finding their pleasure in beholding the frolics of the little ones, and occasionally joining in with them themselves and trying to add to their happiness. At 7-10 p.m., after a second and much appreciated refreshment, all were comfortably seated on the vehicles and a start made for Larne and Kilwaughter, at which places all arrived in peace and safety at a not unduly late hour for a fine summer night, having spent a most happy day. The weather was delightfully warm and if a little dust and the smell of petrol from motor cars as they whirled rapidly past did now and again mingle with the exhilarating ozone from the sea breezes, these trifling discomforts were speedily forgotten in the general joy and hilarity which prevailed.

**Moneyrea.** — Floral services were held in the church on Sunday, 5th July, and collections were taken up on behalf of the Sunday School funds. The church was prettily decorated, and special hymns and an anthem were rendered by the choir, under the direction of Mrs. Slipper. Miss Lamont and Miss E. Slipper sang a duet at the children's service in the afternoon. The preacher at both services was the Rev. George J. Slipper, pastor loci, who spoke at the morning service upon the "Lessons of the Flowers," basing his remarks upon a text chosen from the 86th Psalm, at the 8th verse, and in the afternoon upon "Childhood's Dreams." The attendances were very fair, and the collections very satisfactory.

The Scholars' Annual Fete was held on Saturday, July 18th, in a field kindly lent by Mr. Kirk. There was a large gathering of scholars, parents and friends. Refreshments were served to the children on assembling in the schoolroom, after which they marched to the field headed by the Moneyrea Flute Band, who kindly gave a selection of music in the field. Races were arranged for the scholars, under the supervision of Mr. T. J. Millen, and prizes awarded to successful competitors. An adjournment was made at 5 o'clock for tea, served by the teachers and elder scholars, after which games and sports were indulged in until a late hour, and were greatly enjoyed by the numerous company augmented by many friends from neighbouring churches. At the close of the evening the scholars marched back to the school green, and votes of thanks were accorded to Mr. Kirk for his kindness in granting the use of his fine field; to the Band for their kind services throughout the day, and to Mr. Millen who superintended the arrangements. Great credit is also due to the Misses Maxwell, Mehaffey, Minnis, Miscampbell, Abernethy and Hogg, also to Mrs. Slipper, for their admirable arrangements and service of the tea.

**Mountpottinger.** — The Annual Floral Services were held on Sunday, 28th June, when the Church was as usual tastefully decorated. The resident Minister (Rev. J. Worthington, B.A.) conducted the morning Service, and also the Children's Service in the afternoon, whilst at night Rev. G. J. Slipper of Moneyrea officiated. In addressing the children Mr. Worthington based his remarks on "Flowers and what we can learn from them," and pointed out to the young people that from the orderliness of nature and the regularity of the seasons they might readily learn how to cultivate regular and orderly habits of life. He further dwelt upon the quiet steady growth of flowers, and argued that by that the children should be encouraged thereby to quiet steady effort for their work in the world. The usefulness of flowers in beautifying the world and making people cheerful and happy was given as an illustration of teaching children usefulness, as a means to the end of their making life cheerful and happy for other people. Under the direction of Mr. Ald. Brown the choir rendered anthems and solos suitable to the occasion, and also led the scholars in the singing of the special hymns.

The Scholars' Annual Excursion took place on Saturday, July 4th, and was favoured with magnificent weather. Having pleasant recollections of the visit last year, the Committee again fixed upon Groomsport as the venue, and the popularity of this decision was evidenced by the party numbering over 100. The drive was much appreciated, albeit the spell of dry weather had made the roads somewhat dusty. On arriving at the village refreshments were served in the local schoolroom, after which an adjournment was made to the sands where the time passed all too quickly. Skipping competitions, races, and a wild flower-gathering expedition, for all of which prizes were given, were heartily entered into by the children. Shortly after tea the return journey was commenced and Mountpottinger was reached at 9-30 p.m., after what was agreed on all sides to have proved a most enjoyable outing.

**Newtownards.**—Once again the process of the months brought round the Floral Service in the above Church, on July 5th. As on previous occasions, the Church was tastefully decorated with flowers and foliage. The pulpit and choir were the piece de resistance,

while the windows along the east wall fittingly harmonised with their scheme of colour form. Special hymns were sung with great taste and expression by an augmented choir. Miss Barnes, of Greyabbey, sang with great feeling and expression, "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide." The Rev. R. Maxwell King presided at the harmonium. The Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., the minister of First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, conducted the Service, taking for his text Psalm civ. 24. In the course of his address he referred to their modern privilege to behold a larger and more wonderful world than the men of old time. They could say with the Psalmist, "The earth is full of Thy riches," but in saying that they gazed with admiration upon things once unnoticed or regarded as commonplace. Thus the late Professor Henry Drummond, when thinking of the most significant epochs in his development, thought especially of the time when he first made the acquaintance of John Ruskin's works. "Ruskin," he gratefully declared, "taught me to see." Where before he was blind, now he had learned to behold the manifold works of God, to discover grace and beauty in the commonest wayside flower, to admire the wonderful contour of clouds, to be impressed deeply by the "simplest of the green things that live." They who shared that wider vision characteristic of modern times thought of the flowers at that time. What had they learned to see in them? In the first place they impressed them with the sense of their fresh, simple beauty. Without them life would be bereft of its brightness, would lack its greatest charm. They had come more and more to find in the flowers a real educational value. They had their message and their most helpful service. Especially was that the case in the large industrial towns and cities. One English town had done a splendid work by providing window boxes for the cultivation of plants and flowers, and by offering prizes for the best results. That scheme had at once fostered habits of observation and carefulness, and at the same time introduced a much-needed element of beauty into many homes and lives. As part of the scheme there was a juvenile branch, which that year gave out in the spring 2,000 plants to the children in the poorer schools. Later these were examined and prizes awarded. Who could over-estimate the value of the flowers when thus made the constant companions of the children? The care and attention they received they repaid tenfold by evoking a truer and ever-increasing appreciation of natural beauty. And yet flowers had ever been valued as symbols of moral and spiritual truths. Was not Jesus thinking of that when his eyes wandered away from his hearers to rest upon the superb beauty of the lilies? The latter were to be considered because they contained lessons for human growth and culture. So a great modern poet urged his readers to wear "the white flower of a blameless life," meaning thereby that the unsullied purity of the flower finds its most fitting reflection in human life in the graces of character and the beauty of holiness. Those were but some of the things the seeing eye found in the flowers, but enough if rightfully considered and thoughtfully observed to make them each and all eager not only to praise God with their lips for His wonderful works, but also sufficient to make them strive to fill their lives fuller of beauty, until at length they had put on holiness as a fitting flower for the garden of God. The preacher and a number of visitors were afterwards entertained by the committee of the church in the vestry.

**Unity Guild Annual Excursion.**—This took place on Saturday, June 27th, the destination being Shane's Castle. A large party took advantage of the glorious day, and entraining shortly after noon for Randalstown, walked through the demesne to Antrim, halting on the way to inspect the old and new Castles, also the graveyard and underground passages. From the terrace a fine view of Lough Neagh sparkling in the sunshine was obtained, and from this vantage point as well as others Rev. W. S. Smith of Antrim gave those present some interesting details of the history attached to the buildings. On arrival at Antrim the visitors were

kindly entertained to tea in the Protestant Hall by the Antrim congregation, at the conclusion of which, the President of the Guild (Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A.) tendered the thanks of all present to Rev. W. S. Smith and his congregation. Before proceeding to the station, a visit was paid to the Church and Manse, with its delightful old-world garden, the cool turf of which made an ideal resting spot. The arrangements were admirably made by the acting Hon. Sec., Mr. Hugh Erskine.

**Note.**—The late Rev. C. J. M'Alester had one brother and one sister—not two sisters as stated in the memoir published in our June number. His sister became the wife of the Rev. Mr. Rosboro, Presbyterian Minister of Rathfriland, Co. Down. His brother emigrated to America, where he died some years since. The £100 which constituted the nucleus of the Orphan Fund was the gift of the late Mrs. Greer, of Belfast.

## ALL SOULS' CHURCH.

Description of New Hall.

The following description of the new buildings in connection with All Souls' Church is taken from the *News-Letter* of May 11th—"The new buildings will consist of a large hall approached through an ample corridor from an open verandah arranged in a sheltered angle which forms the entrance, a committee room, ladies' and gentlemen's cloakrooms and lavatory accommodation arranged on a generous scale, a caretaker's house, pantry accommodation, and other conveniences to facilitate the catering for the various social functions which will be held in the hall. There is also a basement, providing for heating apparatus, storage of fuel, etc., and a store under the platform of the hall, into which chairs and other articles of furniture may be removed on such occasions as the floor of hall may require to be partially cleared. In the design an attempt has been made to give the interior a homely and domestic character rather than that of the ordinary lecture hall. This can hardly fail to be realised in execution. The hall, with its deeply-recessed inglenook fireplace, mullioned windows fitted with leaded lattices, and well-designed, partially open pitch-pine roof, possesses all the elements necessary to secure the desired effect. Externally the buildings are designed in a simple and unpretentious style. They are being constructed of local red brick of very pleasing colour, with dressings of Doulting stone, and are to have roofs of brown Broseley tiles. Effect is gained by picturesque grouping and good proportion rather than by elaboration of detail; and they will no doubt suitably express the uses for which they are intended; while care has evidently been evinced that, though they in no way emulate the dignity and richness of the very beautiful church to which they will form an important adjunct, no note of incongruity shall be apparent in the combination. The architect is Mr. W. J. Gilliland, F.R.I.B.A., and the building already gives evidence that the usual high standard of workmanship put into the buildings erected by the firm of Messrs. W. J. Campbell & Son, the contractors, will be fully maintained. The cost of the erection and furnishing of the building will come to about £2000, and towards this amount there is upwards of £1300, including the legacy. A large sum has therefore to be raised, and an earnest appeal is made for subscriptions so that the building may be opened free of debt. The members of the building committee are Rev. W. H. Drummond (chairman), Messrs. John Montgomery, Thomas Henderson, Kendrick Edwards, Adam Millin, Hugh Erskine (hon. treasurer), Clifton Lodge, Cliftonville, and Francis E. Ward (hon. secretary), Airlie, Marlborough Park, S.

The heart that's truly blest
Is never all its own;
No ray of glory lights the breast,
That lives for self alone.

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